

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A tape drive apparatus comprising:

tape-oriented recording and/or reproducing means for recording and/or reproducing information to and/or from a magnetic tape housed in a tape cassette furnished as a recording medium, said tape cassette being loaded in the apparatus;

memory accessing means for accessing a memory which is incorporated in said tape cassette furnished as said recording medium and which holds management information for write and/or read operations to and/or from said magnetic tape, said memory accessing means writing and/or reading information to and/or from said memory following the accessing;

information acquiring means for acquiring format state designation information from said memory by causing said memory accessing means to access said memory for information retrieval, said format state designation information designating an unformatted state when said magnetic tape has yet to be formatted, said format state designation information further designating a formatted state once said magnetic tape is formatted; and

operation controlling means which, based at least on specifics of the acquired format state designation

information and on a result of a read operation on said magnetic tape by said tape-oriented recording and/or reproducing means, controls a write and/or a read operation on said recording medium.

2. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said operation controlling means determines whether there exists a predetermined logical structure in said management information retrieved as a result of said read operation on said magnetic tape by said tape-oriented recording and/or reproducing means for write and/or read operations to and/or from said magnetic tape.

3. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said operation controlling means determines whether a reproduced signal is obtained as a result of said read operation on said magnetic tape by said tape-oriented recording and/or reproducing means, said read operation retrieving data from a predetermined area of said magnetic tape.

4. A recording and/or reproducing method for use with a tape drive apparatus, the method comprising the steps of:

recording and/or reproducing information to and/or from a magnetic tape housed in a tape cassette furnished as a recording medium, said tape cassette being loaded in

the apparatus;

accessing a memory which is incorporated in said tape cassette furnished as said recording medium and which holds management information for write and/or read operations to and/or from said magnetic tape, said memory accessing step writing and/or reading information to and/or from said memory following the accessing;

acquiring format state designation information from said memory by causing said memory accessing step to access said memory for information retrieval, said format state designation information designating an unformatted state when said magnetic tape has yet to be formatted, said format state designation information further designating a formatted state once said magnetic tape is formatted; and

controlling a write and/or a read operation on said recording medium based at least on specifics of the acquired format state designation information and on a result of a read operation on said magnetic tape performed in said recording and/or reproducing step.

5. A recording medium furnished as a tape cassette in cartridge for housing a magnetic tape to and/or from which to write and/or read information and a memory for holding management information for managing write and/or

read operations to and/or from said magnetic tape;

wherein said memory accommodates format state designation information designating an unformatted state when said magnetic tape has yet to be formatted, said format state designation information further designating a formatted state once said magnetic tape is formatted.